



# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

1<sup>st</sup> February 2026 - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

*"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God"*  
-Matthew 5:1-12a

*Our Parish vision is to bring people closer to Christ by inviting, welcoming, nurturing & nourishing everyone*

**Address:** 346 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 3SB  
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**Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth, (Reg Charity No: 1199568)**  
**Bank details:** CDP, Immaculate Conception Church  
 Sort Code: 30-93-04  
 Account No: 00887995

**Parish Priest:** Fr Anthony Chiatu  
**Parish Deacon:** Dcn Gerard Dailly  
**Hospital Chaplaincy:** (023 8120 8517)  
**University Chaplain:** Sr Emelliana Silva (07426 000213)  
**Safeguarding:**  
[safeguarding@immaculateconception.church](mailto:safeguarding@immaculateconception.church)  
**Parish Administrator:** Cynthia Barretto(023 8055 5470)  
**Confessions:** After 10 am Mass on Saturdays  
**Hall Bookings:** Contact the Parish office

**PARISH OFFICE TIMINGS : Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday 9:00-3 pm, Friday 9-4pm, Monday Closed**

**ALL MASSES ADVERTISED BELOW ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE TO JOIN LIVE AT**  
[www.churchservices.tv/portswoodchur](http://www.churchservices.tv/portswoodchur)

| Date           | Solemnities & Feast days                | Times & Liturgies              |   | Mass Intentions                                   |
|----------------|---|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Sun 1 February | Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time          | 8.30 am<br>10.30 am            | Mass<br>Mass                            | Peace of mind for Maureen<br><br>Recovery of Joan |
| Mon 2 February | <b>The Presentation of the Lord</b>     | <b>-NO MASS-</b>               |   |   |
| Tue 3 February | St Blaise; St Ansgar                    | 9.00 am<br>10.00 am            | Eucharistic Adoration<br>Mass           | Wilfrid White RIP                                 |
| Wed 4 February | Weekday in Ordinary Time                | 10.00 am<br>6pm                | Mass<br>Eucharistic Adoration           | Nichol and Vicky                                  |
| Thu 5 February | St Agatha, Virgin & Martyr              | 10.00 am                       | Mass                                    | Vicki and Eoin Broderick                          |
| Fri 6 February | St Paul Miki and Companions, Martyrs    | 9.00 am<br>9.30 am<br>10.00 am | Eucharistic adoration<br>Rosary<br>Mass | Anna Zepler RIP                                   |
| Sat 7 February | Weekday in Ordinary Time                | 10.00am                        | Mass                                    | Tonney Fernando                                   |
| Sun 8 February | 5 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME | 8.30 am<br>10.30 am            | Mass<br>Mass                            | --<br>--  |

## SUNDAY READINGS



**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13

**Psalm:** Ps 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

**Gospel:** Matthew 5:1-12a

## OTHER REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVIES IN THE PARISH

**All Welcome to join.....**

**Mon - Cooking with Confidence** – 10 am – 1 pm – Church hall kitchen

**Tues - Tea & Coffee after 10 am Mass** – Church hall  
 - RCIA – 7:15 pm – 8.45 pm in the Church hall

**Weds - Parent & Toddler Group (term time only)**  
 10.30am – 12 noon, Church hall

**Thurs - Maintaining the parish gardens** – from 10:30 am  
 - **Multicultural group** – 10:30 am in the Church hall

**Sun - Refreshments after 10.30 am Mass**- Church hall  
 - **Choir Practice** 11:30am-12:30pm in the Church.

## TODAY'S GOSPEL REFLECTION

### *The Call to Beatitude*

*“When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him.*

*He began to teach them, saying:*

***‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’***

*- Matthew 5:1-3*



The Beatitudes call us to the heights of morality and holiness. Those who live according to these divine precepts are blessed beyond measure. The promises to those who live this high calling are great: They become children of God and inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. Furthermore, they receive comfort, satisfaction, mercy, purity, and peace. Though the rewards are great, so are the requirements: spiritual poverty, holy sorrow, meekness, longing for righteousness, a merciful heart, purity, peacemaking, and patient endurance during persecution.

The Beatitudes reveal the culmination of God's moral teaching and the highest revelation of the Christian life. To fully appreciate their significance, it is helpful to understand the history of moral revelation. Doing so is more than a history lesson on God's deepening revelation, it also reveals the path for our spiritual journey toward perfection. Morality begins with the Natural Law—the innate understanding of right and wrong written on the human heart. This Law is from God and is often described as living in accord with right reason or common sense. All people have access to this moral law within their own consciences, enabling them to recognize God as the Creator, honor Him, respect human dignity and the common good, and refrain from acts such as murder, theft, and deception. Though universally present in all people, sin and our fallen human nature cloud our ability to clearly see and follow that law. In the Old Testament, God slowly revealed Himself and called His people to greater holiness and moral living by adding to the Natural Law through revelation. From Abraham and his descendants, God raised up Moses through whom He revealed the Ten Commandments—a concise moral code rooted in Natural Law but explicitly revealed by God that called His chosen people to right worship, justice, and love for one's neighbor.

Through the prophets—such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel—God called Israel to move beyond mere external observance of the law to an interior conversion of heart. Isaiah emphasized the virtues of justice and mercy, Jeremiah prophesied a new covenant in which God's law would be written on the hearts of His people, and Ezekiel promised that God would give His people a new heart and a new spirit, enabling them to follow His statutes. The wisdom literature—Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom, Sirach—deepened the understanding of moral life by revealing moral gifts, such as the Fear of the Lord, the blessedness of righteousness, and the call to trust in God's providence and live a virtuous life.

The Beatitudes elevate all laws of the Old Covenant. Jesus not only calls us to profound holiness, He also provides the means to achieve it through His Sacrifice, transmitted through the grace of the Sacraments. To live the Beatitudes is to live in imitation of Christ, who perfectly embodied all virtues in His life, Passion, and Resurrection. Hence, the Beatitudes are not only a moral code we must follow, they are a participation in and union with the Son of God, Who lived the Beatitudes to perfection.

As we ponder the Beatitudes, reflect today on their high and glorious calling, as well as their rewards. Sometimes, reading the Beatitudes can leave us discouraged, as we are aware of how far we are away from perfecting them. Dispel discouragement and know that these new divine precepts are attainable by grace. Set your eyes on the heights of perfection and open yourself to the abundant grace offered. Doing so will not only result in glorious spiritual rewards in this life, it will also result in the greatest eternal rewards in Heaven.

*A reflection for the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)*

[www.mycatholic.life](http://www.mycatholic.life)

## PARISH NOTICES

### Pilgrimage to Lourdes, October 18–22, 2026

You are gently invited to join a small pilgrimage journey to Lourdes this October, a place where heaven has touched earth, where countless pilgrims have come seeking peace, healing, and a deeper encounter with God.

In Lourdes, we walk in the footsteps of St Bernadette, pray at the Grotto where Our Lady appeared, and join pilgrims from across the world in prayer, Mass, and candlelight procession. Many who visit speak of a profound sense of stillness, hope, and renewal that stays with them long after they return home.

Dates: 18th – 22nd October 2026

Cost: £700 per person (Full Board Included)

Group: A small, prayerful group of just 10 pilgrims

This will be a time to step away from the busyness of daily life, to pray, to reflect, and to place our intentions before Our Lady in a very special place of grace.

Please note: Because places are very limited, we need to confirm numbers before next Sunday.

If you feel called to make this pilgrimage, or would like to find out more, please respond as soon as possible.

### An Invitation to Alpha – For the Curious, the Cautious, and the Committed

On **Wednesday 25th February (not the 25th January - diary clash means this has been pushed out) at 7:30pm in the Hall**, our parish will be launching **Alpha** — and everyone is warmly invited.

**Alpha is a series of relaxed, welcoming sessions designed to explore the Christian faith.** Over eleven weeks, each gathering focuses on a different question of life and faith — questions many of us already carry, whether we voice them or not. There is no pressure, no homework, and no expectation to have all the answers. Alpha is simply a space to listen, to share, and to belong. What makes Alpha special is that it is **not a lecture or a debate**, but a **conversation**. It creates room for open and honest discussion, where every viewpoint is respected. You are free to come as you are — whether you are deeply rooted in faith, quietly questioning, returning after time away, or simply curious.

Alpha is also more than a course; it is a **tool for evangelisation and parish renewal**. It helps us grow as a Church that listens well, welcomes generously, and encourages each person to discover their unique calling and gifts. Through Alpha, parishioners are empowered to become **missionary disciples**, grounded in faith and confident in sharing it through everyday life.

If you are interested please save the date as we will be publicising and sharing more information in the coming weeks.



#### Youth Activities – Coming Soon

We are pleased to share that plans are underway to introduce regular social activities for young people in the parish. These will be parish-based, carefully organised, and led by young adults alongside experienced parishioners with many years of involvement in youth ministry, all of whom know the parish community well.

Parents and young people will receive further information in due course, including how to register interest.



#### Support Group for Young Parents – Coming Soon

The parish is also exploring the formation of a small support group for young parents who wish to encourage one another in raising their children in the ways of the Lord. This would provide an opportunity for mutual support, shared reflection, and faith-based conversation within the parish community.

Further details will be communicated in due course once arrangements are in place

### Children's Choir – Upcoming Rehearsal

Our Children's Choir will have a short rehearsal **after the 10:30am Mass next Sunday (8 February)** in preparation for the **Children's Mass on 15 February**. All children aged **5 to 16** are warmly invited to take part. New singers are always welcome.



### Does Science Pose a Threat to Today's Catholicism?

The Catholic Union is delighted to announce that it will be holding a webinar on **Monday 16 March at 6.00pm** to explore whether science poses a threat to today's Catholicism. Chaired by Catherine Pepinster, well known journalist, attendees will hear from Revd Dr Gareth Leyshon, Astrophysicist, Catholic Priest of the Archdiocese of Cardiff-Menevia and parish priest of the four churches comprising Our Lady of the Valleys.

Dr Leyshon, Astrophysicist, has been key in the evangelisation work in the Archdiocese of Cardiff having built up a network of 150 lay Catholics keen to share faith across the length and breadth of the Archdiocese and also through the Cornerstone project. He is currently Vice-Chair of the Charismatic Diocesan Service of Communion for South Wales and Herefordshire.

Those wishing to register for the webinar on Monday 16 March at 6.00pm please email [info@catholicunion.org.uk](mailto:info@catholicunion.org.uk) and a zoom link will be provided. Booking is essential.

If you would like to watch this as part of a group, please contact **Mary Gobbi**.

### Please Let Us Know – We Are Here for You

Our parish family cares deeply for one another, especially during times of illness, hospital stays, or when someone is unable to leave their home. If you, or a loved one, are in hospital, unwell at home, or housebound, we kindly ask that you let the parish know. Many people are surprised to learn that hospitals do not automatically contact a priest when a Catholic patient is admitted. In the same way, the parish may not know if someone is sick or unable to come to Mass unless we are told.

Letting us know allows us to:

If you are unwell, it is perfectly okay to ask a family member, friend, neighbour, or hospital staff member to contact the parish on your behalf. A simple phone call can make a big difference. For those who are sick or housebound, receiving a visit and Holy Communion can be a powerful reminder that you remain a valued and loved part of our parish community. You are not forgotten, and you are always welcome.

**Please remember: asking for a priest or a visit is not “making a fuss.” It is an act of faith and a source of grace.**

If you or someone you care for would like a visit, Holy Communion, or prayer—whether at home or in hospital—please contact us: **Parish Office: 02380 555470** Email: [office@immaculateconception.church](mailto:office@immaculateconception.church)

*“I was sick and you visited me.” (Matthew 25:36)*

For urgent pastoral care outside office hours, please contact the parish number and leave a message if not answered.

- ❖ Arrange a visit from a Catholic priest
- ❖ Offer Holy Communion at home or in hospital
- ❖ Provide the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick
- ❖ Offer prayer, comfort, and pastoral support

